

Good morning Epidemiology Colleagues,

Diatherix, as some of you may be aware, is a reference laboratory located in Alabama. This laboratory has been gaining in popularity over the past few years and is now producing a noticeable volume of the non-culture laboratory results for Florida residents. The Bureau of Epidemiology has partnered with Diatherix to streamline the process of forwarding specimens to the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories in Jacksonville (BPHL - Jacksonville) for confirmation and additional characterization in response to potential outbreaks.

On July 15, 2014, Diatherix began automatically forwarding specimens for a specific set of organisms (see below) to BPHL - Jacksonville. Specimens will be shipped from Diatherix on Tuesday or Wednesday of each week for delivery at BPHL - Jacksonville each Wednesday or Thursday. BPHL - Jacksonville staff will automatically test a subset of the specimens (highlighted in yellow below) upon receipt. All other specimens will be stored for a period of six months.


**To be automatically forwarded from Diatherix:**

- Enterohemorrhagic *Escherichia coli* (EHEC)
  - Shiga-like toxin gene (*stx1*)
  - Shiga-like toxin gene (*stx2*)
- Enteroinvasive *E. coli* (EIEC)/*Shigella*
- *Listeria monocytogenes*
- *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*

If you receive a positive Diatherix laboratory result for an organism not included in the list above, please review the case definition (<http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/disease-reporting-and-management/disease-reporting-and-surveillance/case-def-archive.html>) for the associated reportable disease/condition to determine if that specimen should be forwarded to BPHL - Jacksonville for additional testing. If you have questions concerning a case definition, please contact the Merlin case reviewer for clarification. If you determine the specimen needs to be forwarded, please follow-up with the Merlin case reviewer who will contact Diatherix on your behalf to arrange shipment of the specimen.

If you receive a positive Diatherix laboratory result for an organism included on the list above, that is not automatically tested further, and would like to request additional testing be completed, please contact the Merlin case reviewer. If it is agreed that additional testing is warranted (e.g., confirmation is necessary, specimen is associated with a potential outbreak, other unique situation), the Merlin case reviewer will contact BPHL - Jacksonville to arrange that testing. Requests for additional testing of Diatherix specimens from county health department staff made directly to BPHL - Jacksonville staff will be referred back to the Merlin case reviewer.

The appropriate Merlin case reviewer can be determined by navigating to the respective case's Basic Case screen in Merlin. The case reviewer's name is located in the Case Information section, directly below the FL Disease Code (see example below).


Communicable

[Home](#)
[Search](#)
[Outbreak](#)
[Analysis](#)
[Resources](#)
[Task](#)
[Admin](#)
[EpiGateway](#)

Search:

**Profile**

- Profile Details
- Summary
- History
- Cases

**Basic Case Information**

**Note: The fields labeled in blue indicate the fields that are required for reporting.**

Name:  **Age at Event:**

SSN:  Date of Birth:

**Dx Status: Reportable by surveillance**

**Case**

- Basic Data**
- Lab Results
- EPI Link
- Case Overview

**Case Information**

**FL Disease Code:** Escherichia coli, Shiga Toxin-Producing (STEC) Infection - 00800 ▾

**Primary Reviewer(s): NICOLE KIKUCHI**

Investigator:

Please don't hesitate to contact the Merlin Helpdesk or the applicable Merlin case reviewer should you have any questions.

Please feel free to forward this announcement to other appropriate staff.

Thank you,  
Merlin Helpdesk